



NATIONAL
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SERVICE

USDA/NASS/Virginia Field Office
P.O. Box 1659
Richmond, VA 23218-1659
Phone (804) 771-2493
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/va>

WEATHER & CROPS



Weekending: March 31 2013

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WEATHER CONDITIONS AND CROP SUMMARY FOR MARCH 31, 2013

It was a wet and unseasonably cold week for the Old Dominion. Temperatures for the week were about 8 degrees below normal, and most areas experienced below freezing temperatures for the nighttime lows. Precipitation was in the form of rain and snow. Due to the weather, days suitable for field work were 3.4. Despite the cold weather, calving progressed well. The majority of livestock was in good to excellent condition. Hay storage was running low; the lack of pasture growth and longer winter conditions contributed to a higher demand for supplemental feeding. Except for a few producers in the warmer eastern Virginia counties, farmers are still waiting for the ground temperature to warm up before beginning to plant corn. Other farming activities for the week included starting vegetables in greenhouses, taking soil samples, applying lime, fertilizers, and herbicides, and last minute repairs and machinery adjustments.

TOPSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT				
Week Ending	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
March 31, 2013	0	3	60	37
SUBSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT				
Week Ending	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
March 30, 2013	2	4	70	24

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CROP CONDITION PERCENT					
Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	4	16	30	45	5
Livestock	2	9	25	53	11
Hay, Other	1	4	57	32	6
Hay, Alfalfa	0	1	44	44	11
Winter Wheat	1	2	20	66	11
Barley	0	2	28	61	9
Oats	0	0	22	72	6
Tobacco, Greenhouse	0	0	14	60	26
Tobacco, Plantbeds	0	0	5	90	5
Apples, All	0	0	1	99	0
Peaches	0	0	35	63	2
Grapes	0	0	1	99	0
Potatoes, Summer	0	0	3	95	2

CROP PROGRESS PERCENT – WITH COMPARISONS				
Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5 Year Avg.
Corn Planted	1	NA	6	2
Summer Potatoes	63	NA	62	NA

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING March 31, 2013

City	Temperature						Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Last Week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal *	Jan. 1 to date	Jan. 1 dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	52	29	64	26	40	-9	0.81	3.02	-0.61	10.65	0.32
Norfolk	51	37	61	34	44	-7	0.71	2.27	-1.64	9.83	-1.34
Richmond	52	34	64	31	43	-7	0.77	5.25	1.43	13.18	2.72
Roanoke	50	33	65	31	42	-8	0.87	3.12	-0.55	12.41	2.41
Wash/Dulles	49	31	60	27	40	-6	0.49	3.09	-0.26	8.42	-0.73

* Normal based on 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>. Source: USDA, NASS, Virginia Field Office.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

NORTHERN

FAIRFAX

It has been unseasonably cold.

FREDERICK (Jeanette R Smith)

We had approximately 6 inches of snowfall on Sunday. Weather has been cool and wet.

WESTERN

HIGHLAND (Rodney Leech)

Unusual cold temps and ground snow cover have caused above average feed for the month of March and some farmers hay supply are running low. Maple production has concluded with above average production for most producers, with spots of below average production on some of the higher elevated sugar bushes. Lambing and calving is progressing and is considered normal or average vs. other years.

CENTRAL

AMELIA (Joan D Poore)

Ground moisture is good at the moment. Windy conditions dry the topsoil, but still quite soggy in places. Topdressing is complete for the small grains. For some reason the barley crop does not look as good as the wheat. The ground temperatures are still too cold to start an early planting of corn. Temperatures are running below average the past couple of weeks.

CHESTERFIELD (Joan D Poore)

Ground is very soggy - even with the everyday winds we been having. Small grain crops look good. Too wet and ground temperatures are too cold.

HANOVER (Jim Tate)

March than we have had in the rest of the winter in aggregate. This includes snow and cold weather. The cold wet conditions have really held back normal spring time conditions and activity. Normally by now, our producers have a good bit of corn in the ground and some is up. I know of no corn planted yet as fields are still too wet and cold. Similarly small grains have not seen significant development...and are behind. Similarly pastures have yet to break dormancy. Livestock wintered fairly well, but hay is beginning to be in short supply as few anticipated the need to feed this long into winter. There is hay but significant price shopping and hauling is going on. This is true for cattle hay as well as horse hay.

NELSON (Michael Lachance)

Partial bloom in peaches. Apple buds remain tight.

EASTERN

ESSEX (Keith Balderson)

Fields started to dry out some during the end of the week, and field work picked up as farmers were busy topdressing wheat and applying lime, fertilizer, and herbicides for spring crops. A few producers will start planting corn this week. Cool conditions are delaying spring growth of fescue and orchard grass pastures and hayfields, but given the good soil moisture conditions, growth should be good once temperatures warm up.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY (continued)

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

(Eastern continues)

MIDDLESEX (David Moore)

Corn planting still on hold for the most part due to wet fields and cool temps. By next week, I suspect there will be some limited corn planting activity. Not much field prep has occurred either. Small grains look good but are in need of additional nitrogen. Producers are busy making last minute machinery adjustments and repair and seed and supply purchases. Soil sampling continues as does lime applications. Some hay and pasture fertilizer applications. Vegetables in greenhouses are beginning to grow as cool temps have stalled some of that too.

SOUTHERN

FRANKLIN (Cynthia Martel)

Pastures are slowly growing. Temperatures in Franklin County have been up and down; farmers really want warmer weather to start working fields. Still seeing a fair amount of rain. Winter Wheat and Barley in Franklin County are between 4-6 inches tall. No corn or soybean being planted as of March 28, 2013

SOUTHEASTERN

BRUNSWICK (Cynthia L. Gregg)

Last week's weather temperatures were up and down. Producers are putting out fertilizer and lime along with some burn down applications for no-till. Small grains are coming along.

PRINCE GEORGE (Scott Reiter)

Producers made progress with wheat nitrogen applications last week. Wet conditions have prevented sprayers from working in some fields. Some corn has been planted under less than ideal conditions. Producers are preparing for corn planting and will likely start next week. Soil temperatures are still in the low 40's and even the upper 30's some days last week.

Southampton (Chris Drake)

Cool, moist conditions are delaying pre-plant burn down herbicide applications for cotton producers.

CHESAPEAKE CITY (Watson Lawrence)

Field activity has been slow due to continuous wet weather. Farmers are waiting on fields to dry. Much of corn weed burn down [herbicide] and winter wheat fertilization has been done, except in wet areas. Weather has been a factor delaying timeliness of work though. Wheat has tillered well in most fields, but not as advanced as last year physiologically.

VIRGINIA BEACH (Roy D. Flanagan III)

Farmers in Virginia Beach have finally been able to get on the ground and make much needed fertilizer applications and weed sprays on winter wheat. The very first field of corn was planted last week and the very first ripe strawberries of the season showed up last week with the bulk of the farms not starting for another three to four weeks.

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